

GOOD REASONS NOT TO DRINK

TEENS KNOW THAT MANY PEOPLE DRINK WITHOUT PROBLEMS, SO SCARE TACTICS AREN'T USUALLY A GOOD WAY TO CONVINCE THEM OF THE DANGERS OF ALCOHOL. HOWEVER, THERE ARE PLENTY OF GOOD REASONS FOR TEENS TO AVOID ALCOHOL.

- * YOU DON'T WANT YOUR CHILD TO DRINK. BE SURE TO MAKE IT CLEAR THAT YOU DON'T APPROVE OF DRINKING, AND ESTABLISH CONSEQUENCES FOR BREAKING THE RULES. YOUR VALUES MATTER A GREAT DEAL TO YOUR CHILD, EVEN IF HE OR SHE DOESN'T ALWAYS SHOW IT.
- * DRINKING CAN CAUSE EMBARRASSMENT. YOU PROBABLY ALREADY KNOW THAT TEENS ARE VERY CONCERNED ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS WITH THEIR FRIENDS AND AVOIDING EMBARRASSMENT. SO IT'S A GOOD IDEA TO REMIND THEM THAT DRINKING



CAN CAUSE EMBARRASSING SITUATIONS THAT COULD DAMAGE THEIR RELATIONSHIPS AND THEIR SELF-RESPECT.

- * UNDERAGE DRINKING IS ILLEGAL. IF YOUR CHILD IS CAUGHT DRINKING, THEY COULD BE FORBIDDEN FROM SPENDING TIME WITH THEIR FRIENDS, SUSPENDED FROM SCHOOL, OR EVEN FINED OR ARRESTED.
- * DRINKING CAN BE DANGEROUS. DRINKING INCREASES THE RISK OF FALLS, BURNS, CAR ACCIDENTS, UNPROTECTED SEX, AND MANY OTHER DANGERS. REMIND YOUR CHILD THAT EVEN THOUGH THEY'RE NORMALLY TOO SMART TO FALL VICTIM TO THESE THINGS, DRINKING MAY CLOUD THEIR JUDGMENT AND GET THEM INTO A SITUATION THEY WOULD NORMALLY AVOID.
- * YOU HAVE A FAMILY HISTORY OF ALCOHOLISM. IF ONE OR MORE MEMBERS OF YOUR FAMILY HAVE A DRINKING PROBLEM, YOUR CHILD NEEDS TO KNOW THAT HE OR SHE MAY BE MORE LIKELY TO DEVELOP A DRINKING PROBLEM.

PREVENTION STRATEGIES FOR PARENTS

MAINTAINING OPEN LINES OF COMMUNICATION IS THE SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT THING YOU CAN DO TO HELP YOUR TEEN AVOID ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUG PROBLEMS. BUT IT'S NOT ENOUGH. RESEARCH ALSO SHOWS THAT STAYING ACTIVE AND INVOLVED AS A PARENT CAN HELP PREVENT YOUR TEEN FROM DRINKING. HERE ARE SOME THINGS YOU CAN DO:



DEVELOP FAMILY RULES ABOUT TEEN DRINKING. WHEN PARENTS ESTABLISH CLEAR RULES ABOUT ALCOHOL USE, THEIR CHILDREN ARE LESS LIKELY TO BEGIN DRINKING.

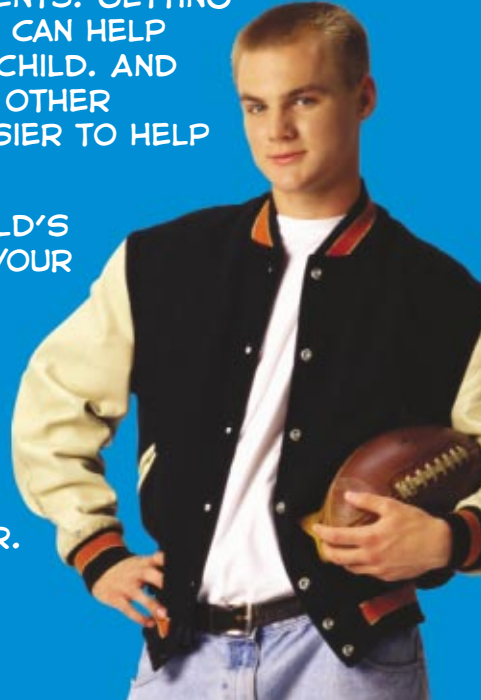
MONITOR ALCOHOL USE IN YOUR HOME. IF YOU KEEP ALCOHOL IN YOUR HOME, KEEP TRACK OF THE SUPPLY. MAKE IT CLEAR THAT YOU DON'T ALLOW UNCHAPERONED PARTIES OR OTHER GATHERINGS IN YOUR HOME.

IF YOU KNOW OF A RETAILER WHO'S SELLING ALCOHOL TO MINORS, REPORT THEM. THE REPORT CAN BE ENTIRELY CONFIDENTIAL.
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ENCOURAGE YOUR TEEN TO HAVE FRIENDS OVER WHEN YOU ARE HOME. MAKING YOUR HOME AN INVITING PLACE FOR TEENS TO ENTERTAIN WHEN YOU ARE HOME WILL HELP YOU STAY INFORMED ABOUT YOUR CHILD'S FRIENDS AND ACTIVITIES.

GET TO KNOW OTHER PARENTS. GETTING TO KNOW OTHER PARENTS CAN HELP YOU KEEP TABS ON YOUR CHILD. AND WORKING TOGETHER WITH OTHER PARENTS WILL MAKE IT EASIER TO HELP PREVENT ALCOHOL USE.

KEEP TRACK OF YOUR CHILD'S ACTIVITIES. BE AWARE OF YOUR TEEN'S WHEREABOUTS. GENERALLY, YOUR CHILD WILL BE MORE OPEN TO YOUR SUPERVISION IF HE OR SHE FEELS YOU ARE KEEPING TABS BECAUSE YOU CARE, NOT BECAUSE YOU DISTRUST HIM OR HER.



HELPING YOUR TEEN GROW UP
ALCOHOL-FREE
TALKING TO YOUR CHILD ABOUT ALCOHOL

WITH SO MANY DRUGS AVAILABLE TO TEENS TODAY, ALCOHOL MAY SEEM LIKE THE LEAST OF YOUR WORRIES AS A PARENT. **BUT ALCOHOL IS A DRUG,** AND RECENT STUDIES HAVE SHOWN THAT YOUNG TEENS WHO DRINK CAN FACE SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES.

- * THEY ARE FOUR TIMES MORE LIKELY TO DEVELOP ALCOHOL DEPENDENCE THAN THOSE WHO DO NOT DRINK UNTIL ADULTHOOD.
- * THEY ARE FAR MORE LIKELY TO BE VICTIMS OF VIOLENT CRIME INCLUDING RAPE, AGGRAVATED ASSAULT, AND THEFT.
- * THEY ARE AT HIGHER RISK FOR SUICIDE, UNWANTED PREGNANCY, DELINQUENCY, AND SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES.

THE GOOD NEWS IS THAT, AS A PARENT, YOU DO HAVE THE POWER TO HELP YOUR TEEN STEER CLEAR OF ALCOHOL. STUDY AFTER STUDY HAS SHOWN THAT PARENTS HAVE ENORMOUS INFLUENCE OVER THEIR CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOR EVEN DURING THE TEEN YEARS. AND THE BEST TIME TO TALK TO THEM ABOUT ALCOHOL IS BEFORE THEY TAKE THEIR FIRST DRINK.



COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR TEEN

KEEPING OPEN LINES OF COMMUNICATION WITH YOUR TEEN IS THE SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT THING YOU CAN DO TO HELP THEM MAKE THE RIGHT DECISIONS. AND IT MAY BE EASIER THAN YOU THINK. A FEW TIPS TO HELP GET YOU STARTED:

- * ENCOURAGE CONVERSATION ABOUT WHATEVER INTERESTS YOUR TEEN, AND BE A GOOD LISTENER. IF YOUR CHILD FEELS COMFORTABLE TALKING TO YOU, THEY'LL BE MORE LIKELY TO SEEK YOUR ADVICE ABOUT ISSUES THAT CONCERN YOU.

- * ASK OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS THAT LEAD INTO CONVERSATION. AVOID QUESTIONS THAT HAVE A SIMPLE "YES" OR "NO" ANSWER.
- * CONTROL YOUR EMOTIONS, EVEN IF YOU HEAR SOMETHING YOU DON'T LIKE. TRY TO ACKNOWLEDGE YOUR FEELINGS IN A CONSTRUCTIVE WAY INSTEAD OF GETTING ANGRY.
- * TRYING TO "WIN" A DISCUSSION BY EXPLAINING WHY YOUR CHILD IS WRONG WILL QUICKLY TURN A CONVERSATION INTO AN ARGUMENT. IF YOU SHOW RESPECT FOR YOUR CHILD'S VIEWPOINT, THEY'RE MORE LIKELY TO LISTEN TO YOURS.



IMPORTANT FACTS ABOUT ALCOHOL

HERE ARE SOME FACTS THAT YOU MAY WANT TO SHARE WITH YOUR TEEN. REMEMBER, BE A GOOD LISTENER AND MAKE SURE THAT YOUR CONVERSATION DOESN'T TURN INTO A LECTURE!

- * ALCOHOL IS A POWERFUL DRUG. IT SLOWS DOWN THE BODY AND MIND AND IMPAIRS COORDINATION, VISION, CLEAR THINKING AND JUDGMENT.
- * ALCOHOL IS ALCOHOL, NO MATTER WHAT FORM IT'S IN. BEER AND WINE ARE NOT "SAFER" THAN HARD LIQUOR.
- * IT USUALLY TAKES 2 TO 3 HOURS FOR ONE DRINK TO LEAVE THE BODY. NOTHING CAN SPEED UP THIS PROCESS - DRINKING COFFEE, TAKING A COLD SHOWER, OR GOING FOR A WALK WON'T SOBER YOU UP.
- * PEOPLE - EVEN ADULTS - TEND TO BE VERY BAD AT JUDGING HOW MUCH ALCOHOL HAS AFFECTED THEM. JUST BECAUSE YOU THINK YOU CAN DRIVE AFTER A FEW DRINKS DOESN'T MEAN IT'S SAFE.
- * ANYONE CAN DEVELOP A SERIOUS DRINKING PROBLEM - EVEN A TEENAGER.

HOW TO SAY NO TO A DRINK

MANY TEENS WANT TO AVOID ALCOHOL, BUT IT'S OFTEN HARD FOR THEM TO SAY NO WHEN THEY'RE IN A SOCIAL SITUATION WITH FRIENDS. HERE ARE SOME EASY ONE-LINERS TO HELP GET THEM THINKING ABOUT HOW TO SAY NO.

NO THANKS
I DON'T FEEL LIKE IT - DO YOU HAVE ANY SODA?
I DON'T DRINK BACK OFF!
ARE YOU TALKING TO ME? FORGET IT!
I SAID NO!

THIS BROCHURE ADOPTED WITH THANKS FROM
THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE ON ALCOHOL ABUSE AND ALCOHOLISM.



Michigan Department
of Community Health



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